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The Dedication of Elisha

by JOHN WEIDENAAR

ELIJAH and Elisha were at Gil-. Elijah said to Elisha: "Tarry here, ray thee, for Jehovah hath sent me far as Bethel." Elisha said: "As ovah liveth and as thy soul liveth, will not leave thee." So they both nt down to Bethel. At Bethel, Elijah the second time told Elisha to tarry re since he was sent by the Lord Jericho. Again Elisha refused to ve him. Coming to Jericho, Elijah the third time tried to persuade isha to leave him. For the third time isha refused. Why did Elisha stick Elijah like a sandburr? Why did isha resolutely refuse to leave Elijah?

The answer is found in the following nsiderations: In the first place, Eli-a apparently knew that the Lord was ing to take up Elijah by a whirlwind o heaven. This is confirmed by the port of the sons of the prophets at thel and at Jericho. They said to isha: "Knowest thou that Jehovah ll take away thy master from thy ad today?" And Elisha had replied, ea, I know it." In the second place, isha knew the spiritual stature of ijah. Call to mind Elijah's heroic ith at Mount Carmel. There he stood most singlehanded over against the cked Ahab, the demonic Jezebel, and e hundreds of prophets of Baal. But isha also knew how utterly disillu-oned Elijah had become after Mount rmel when Jezebel swore an oath that e would kill Elijah. He ran for his e and sat under a juniper tree in e wilderness and requested that he ight now die. He said: "It is enough; w O Jehovah, take away my life for I am not better than my fathers."

At this point the Lord knew better than to discuss the matter with Elijah. Instead He sent an angel who provided food and drink for Elijah. The angel bade him eat because the journey would be too far for him in his weakened condition. Elijah ate and drank and went in the strength of that food forty days and nights unto Horeb, the mount of God. At Horeb the word of Jehovah came to him and he said to him: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" And he said: "I have been very jealous for Jehovah, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine alters, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only am left and they seek my life to take it away."

Then Elijah went forth and stood upon the mount before Jehovah. A great and strong wind rent the mountain and brake in pieces the rocks; but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there came an earthquake but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake there came a fire but the Lord was not in the fire. Then came a still, small voice. Elijah had, though he still protested momentarily, learned the lesson. It was at this time that Elijah was bidden to anoint Elisha to be prophet in his room.

* * *

To return to Elisha: Elisha knew that he was to be the successor of Elijah. If Elijah had succumbed to despair in the face of the nearly total apostasy of those days, what could Elisha do after Elijah would be taken away? The prospect of taking the place of Elijah as prophet in Israel and the responsibility of leadership over the sons of the prophets in such a time as that overwhelmed Elisha. Like Jacob of old he was saying to Elijah: I can not, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. Thus it appears that the first ingredient in the dedication of Elisha is *his profound realization of*

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Dedication of Elisha — Continued

the magnitude of the task that faced him.

When Elisha came to Bethel the sons of the prophets gathered about him and told him that the Lord was going to take Elijah from him. Elisha answered them, I knew it; hold ye your peace. The same thing happened at Jericho. The question to be answered is this: Why did Elisha answer the sons of the prophets at Bethel and Jericho so brusquely and curtly? The sons of the prophets knew the meaning of the departure of Elijah. They were aware of the fact that this meant a promotion for Elisha. For a considerable period of time since the anointing of Elisha he had been relegated to the background. The imposing figure of Elijah completely overshadowed that of Elisha. We do not even find Elisha in the company of Elijah during his relatively extended period of apprenticeship. Elijah lived a solitary life and hardly availed himself of the services of Elisha. A smaller man might have grumbled and Elisha may have upon occasion wondered. When the sons of the prophets gathered about him with the news of Elijah's imminent departure the suggestion lay close at hand that now at length Elisha would be coming into his own. But Elisha correctly perceived despite the ingratiating manner and partly because of it that he was face to face with a dangerous temptation. The curtness of his reply to the sons of the prophets (Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace) was the result of his sincere effort to resist the temptation of the evil one. It certainly would not comport with the true spirit of a prophet of the Lord to view the departure of Elijah as nothing else than an opportunity for the satisfaction of personal and selfish ambition on the part of Elisha. When Elisha told the sons of the prophets to hold their peace he was not lacking in civility but he was fighting within his soul the battle between the flesh and the spirit. In winning this battle he reveals to us the second ingredient of dedication. He showed thereby that *he had a correct estimation of his own weakness and limitations* to carry out the assignment imposed upon him by the departure of Elijah.

* * *

HAVING passed the two tests, the time had come for the third one. Elijah and Elisha together cross the Jordan and Elijah can now ask the question: "Ask what I shall do for thee before I am taken from thee." Elisha replies: "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." Elijah correctly adjudged that to be a hard thing.

It was a hard thing not because Elisha asked for a double portion. That does not mean that Elisha wanted to be twice as competent as Elijah. Such a request would have been the height of arrogance. A double portion is still a portion, a part of, and much less than the whole or double the whole of the spirit that animated Elijah. Just as the firstborn in a family ordinarily received a double portion of his father's possessions in order that he might make ample provision for the rest of the family, so here too a double portion was perfectly commensurate with the double task of being both a prophet of Israel and the leader of the sons of the prophets. When Elisha therefore asked for a double portion he was giving evidence of genuine humility rather than of pride.

Nonetheless what Elisha asked was indeed a hard thing, but for another reason. When the Lord takes away such men as Kuyper and Bavinck, Warfield and Machen, those who are called to step into their shoes find it a hard thing indeed to carry on in their room. None of us can assume that our being servants of the Lord as a matter of course endows us with the needed qualifications for the immense task that rests upon each of us. No one dares to think that because he is a Christian he is automatically equipped with what it takes to be a Christian. No one who is a preacher may imagine that his being a preacher as a matter of course gives him the required competence. No one who is a teacher should ever dream that the fact of being appointed to a teaching position will of itself enable him to function as a teacher. And Elisha was reminding Elijah and all of us how desperately we are in need of divine qualification.

Observe too that Elisha asked of Elijah "a double portion of *thy* spirit." That is not a typographical error. That is exactly it. The Spirit of the Lord is meant, of course. But the Spirit of the Lord does not operate individualistically although he does indeed work personally. Back of this petition of Elisha is a deep sense of oneness, corporateness, a sense of history and cont nuity. There is in Elisha a realizatic that God works in the community the Church and through the fellowsh of the believers. Elisha is correct anticipating the *modus operandi* of t Holy Spirit as it appears notably the New Testament Church. Paul ga the most effective expression to t when he admonished the Ephesians n to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Pa learned this lesson on the road to D mascus when the Lord Jehovah, th is, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and J cob, appeared to him and identifi Himself with the words: I am Jesu More significantly still, it was this se same Jehovah-Jesus who said to Pa "Why persecutes thou ME?" Paul w persecuting those whom he adjudg to be the gullible, stupid, and misguic disciples of the Way who were ve ordinary people; but Jesus said, Y are persecuting ME! When you h them, I feel it! They are mine, they in Christ, they are in me. It was so thing of this that Elisha perceived c rectly when he begged Elijah for double portion of "*thy* spirit."

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BUT although that is indeed hard thing, in view of what we because we begin with the Spirit often end with the flesh, it is not possible. Elisha can obtain a dou

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ortion of the spirit, who is the Holy pirit, and who dwells in the believing ommunity, if certain requirements are et. Take careful note of the three equisites for Elisha's endowment. hey are: "If thou see me . . .; as they ill went on . . . and talked." Elisha ad to *see* Elijah; Elisha had to *walk* ith Elijah; and Elisha had to *talk* with lijah. That is the *modus operandi* the Holy Spirit in the Church of the ving God. It was that in the old dis-ensation. By so much the more it is at after Pentecost. Now too we can appreciate the pivotal pertinency of Paul's admonition: Stop grieving the Holy Spirit by bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, railing, and malice towards your fellow-believers for by doing this to your brother and sister you are ripping off from the promise of God the seal that gives you assurance and effectiveness in your work and service of God!

As Elisha communed with Elijah by talking and walking with him Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven and Elisha saw it. That he passed the test and fulfilled the requirements without which he could not have been endowed with the Spirit that animated Elijah we know because he cried: "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" And God abundantly confirmed Elisha's expectation for when he smote the waters of Jordan with the mantle of Elijah, they divided and Elisha went over. Thus the third ingredient in dedication is *the proper attitude towards and appreciation for our fellow-workers in the Church of the Lord.* Let us be one and work together for "we be brethren."

Of Writing Many Books

by HENRY ZYLSTRA

A WHILE BACK I saw a new ook lying on a table. It had an at-ractive sort of title: *The History and haracter of Calvinism.* It was a big t book, 466 pages of it, fresh from e press, the Oxford University Press. hat is the sort of book, I said to myself, at is the sort of undertaking that ought have come from one of us. In swer to the question, Who speaks for lvinism?, I felt like saying, We do.

For a moment I hoped the thing had ppened, and that one of us had come rough. I looked for the author's name d found it. No, it was not a Dutch me. The author was John T. McNeill, uburn Professor of Church History Union Theological Seminary. I anced at the table of contents. There as a section on the pre-Reformation urch. Then followed one on Calvin's e and achievement. A third discussed e spread of Calvinism in Europe and merica. A final section treated of lvinism and modern issues. Just the rt of book, I thought again, that might ve come from one of us.

Well, I reflected, if we cannot pro-ce the author of the book, we can least contribute the materials for it. e can supply the sources. I turned to e bibliography and index. In the bliography of this book on Calvinism, history and character, there was not single contribution from a Christian eformed source. In the index there as, indeed, a familiar name. It was erkhof's name. I checked to make sure is was not the Barthian Berkhof of e *Hervormde* Netherlands. No, it as our Berkhof, though his initial was ven, not as L for Louis, but as D for do not know what.

One of our men, therefore, "made" the index to this history of Calvinism, and rated one sentence in the 644-page book. I flipped the pages of the volume to make sure there was no more of us than that. Then I found a half-sentence reference to the *Calvin Forum.* Congratulations!

This was something of a shock to me, but it brought home, I suppose, a useful lesson. When a person is inside a thing or stands next to it, the Christian Reformed Church, say, or Calvin College and Seminary, it looks big to him. He lacks the perspective and misses the proportion that distance gives. Here he was thinking that Calvinism in church and religion and life meant him. And then it comes home to him from such a book as this that Calvinism, its history and its character, can be pretty adequately described without reference to him and his church at all. It is, presumably, a useful lesson to learn.

This lesson learnt, however, it remains disappointing that we have been so unproductive in the very area of our conviction and our specialty, and that we have been this just when others in late decades and late years have done much to develop precisely this area of our specialization. In fact, the author of *The History and Character of Calvinism* found it necessary to point out that it was not Christian Reformed effort which signalled the renewed interest in Calvin. He writes:

> *A revival of Calvinism, modified in various ways, is also apparent in the Anglo-Saxon world. It is apparently not much affected by Christian Reformed books in English but has arisen through a discriminating reconsideration of Calvin's thought by writers such as Thomas M. Lindsay, Herbert Darling Foster, A. Mitchell Hunter, and, later, Quirinus Breen, Georgia Harkness, R. N. Carew Hunt, James Mackinnon, and Arthur Dakin. More recently the Barth and Brunner discussions have deeply affected . . . such Calvin scholars as Thomas F. Torrance, Edward A. Downey, Jr., and T. H. L. Parker.*

Now it may well be that not all of these books represent Calvin faithfully, and it may also be that some of our own books, such as Dr. Meeter's volume, or the *God-Centered Living* of the Calvinistic Action Committee, are as deserving as some of the books mentioned by Professor McNeill. All the same, his account is in the main fairly taken, and that statement hurts: "A revival of Calvinism . . . not much affected by Christian Reformed books . . ." We have been spectators to all of this production.

I lingered a while longer over the book but got no consolation. What I got was further disappointment:

> *The harrowing experiences of World War I, and its exposure of moral bankruptcy in the West, led to a widespread new spiritual quest. There arose a craving to renew the Calvinist awareness of God and the moral tonic of the Calvinist ethic. The new interest expressed itself in an unprecedented body of historical labor on the Reformed branch of the Reformation and particularly on the thought of Calvin. Calvin's doc-*

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Of Writing Many Books — Continued

trines became a field of research, an arena of animated debate, but also the object of religiously motivated inquiry.

It is my impression that in the way of research and scholarly publication we have done comparatively little beyond dissertations for higher degrees. The "unprecedented body of historical labor on the Reformed branch of the Reformation and particularly on the thought of Calvin" is the work of others.

It may be useful once more to reflect on the reasons for this dearth, comparatively speaking, of general and scholarly publication in our community. The publication of books and articles is not, of course, the only evidence for measuring the vigor of a living Calvinism. Missions, education, church extension, and the personal spiritual walk are all of them evidences too. I do not care to indulge, consequently, because of a paucity of substantial writing among us, in big, broad indictments of all of our works and ways. And, as I hinted, even in this matter of scholarly and general literary activity, we have done something. There has been enough of it, and of sufficient quality, to rate even a little better than Professor McNeill rates it. But by and large he is right. We have not done much.

Nor can we say that the situation is improving as time goes on. In fact, the first and second generation of ministers and professors did rather better on this count of scholarly publication than their successors are doing. Pioneers as they were, with their frontier problems, their primitive circumstances, and their incredibly busy practical lives, they wrote books and pamphlets and articles. The reason is ready to hand. Both they and the people they served were used to European traditions in these matters. They were, both the ministers and the people, simply an extension into the new world of the continental Reformed mind. The old education carried over. It carried over for the leader who wrote and for the reader who read.

Those earlier generations had respect for learning. The preachers and the teachers had this respect and, yes, the people had it too. Since then some of the people have lost this respect. And, in mistaken deference to the sense of the people, some of the leaders too have preferred ability to knowledge, and have consented to going popular. This tendency was encouraged by our total American situation. Our trouble as Americans has been that as our learning became popular it ceased to be learning. As Americans in general, and not as Christian Reformed people in particular, we proliferated schools, colleges, and universities, but we did this as often as not for something other than truth, tradition, or wisdom. It was not learning so much that we wanted as it was ability. In short, we were pragmatic. Way back in the last century Matthew Arnold, an English writer and educator quoted the Frenchman Renan against our American education:

The countries which, like the United States, have created a considerable popular instruction without any serious higher instruction will long have to expiate this fault by their intellectual mediocrity, their vulgarity of manners, their superficial spirit, and their lack of general intelligence.

Perhaps we can shrug off this charge of vulgarity of manners by saying that it is simply the price we are willing to pay for the democratic virtue of genuineness. But those other three defects are important: intellectual mediocrity, superficial spirit, and lack of general intelligence. And speaking now of us Christian Reformed people in particular, and not of Americans generally, it seems time to be warning ourselves about just the thing Renan mentions: *the creation of a considerable popular instruction without any serious higher instruction.* If one of us is to write sometime a big book on the history and character of Calvinism, or if such a book, by whomever it is written, is to include in its bibliography a quantity of substantial contributions stemming from Christian Reformed sources, we shall have to get on with a University.

It may be that we ought also further to rid ourselves of our provinciality if we are to make important contributions to books on the history and character of Calvinism. Provinciality is, I know, a term which can mea little more than a sort of outlandishne of manners. I am thinking of it in different way, and I lean once more Arnold's notion of it to clarify the ter What, he asked,

What, now, can be the reason of th undeniable provincialism of the En lish Puritans and Protestant No conformists? Men of genius a character are born and reared in th medium as in any other. . . . Sure the reason is that the Nonconformi is not in contact with the main cu rent of national life.

Now I know — having learned from Rev. Leonard Verduin — th there can hardly be Nonconformists a country like ours since we have Establishment to conform to. But have this in common with the Engli Puritans and Nonconformists that o convictions as embodied in the cree and standards of our church do set off sharply from the main current the national and international religio life.

The truth is that we have sometim looked and acted like a sect. We ha done this most when we exhibited a la of theological poise. One thinks of t every time he hears the words of t Form: ". . . the true and complete d trine of salvation." Presumably peo in possession of such a thing sho live and act as though they were Rome and not in the provinces. ought to have the confidence of standi in the long and solid traditions of formed Christianity. There is rea no room for an immigrant, minority, provincial mentality in such a faith a confession.

Nevertheless our history has be marred by a good deal of polemic pamphleteering, and we have often insecure and anxious lest the discuss of secondary theological considerati should jeopardize the essentials of religion. It may be that students theology ought to be assigned to rea half ton or so of the harsher and m opinionated *controversia* that h emanated from the "sectari branches of the Reformed churches might serve as a warning to t never, or at least hardly ever, to dulge in them. The best that can said for such disputatious and inte cine contention is that some sort price must be paid for individually distinguished from officially, ap

ended truth. For high sensitivity to ne difference between truth and false-ood, and for the individual appropria-ion of the truth, we are willing indeed o pay a high price, any price. No-ody, presumably, wants to leave the arrow path and crowd into the broad ay. But neither do we quite want it aid of us, as Matthew Arnold said of he English Nonconformist: "he has orshipped the fetish of separatism so ng that he is likely to wish to remain, ke Ephraim, 'a wild ass alone by him-elf.' "

THAT other statement of Arnold aunts me, too: "Men of genius and haracter are born and reared in this iedium as in any other." Genius may e saying too much, but men of talent nd great ability there have certainly een among us, and now are. But one ometimes hears it remarked and him-elf also guesses that quite a few men f more than ordinary promise among s never quite fulfilled the promise. here is pathos in this, deep pathos. here has been some thwarting and ustration of the aspiring power, the riginal force, and the early ideal. erhaps we can all guess at the names, nd guess also at the reasons for the omparative failure. For one thing, is talent has had to live in a small ommunity of like-mindedness. One oes not expect a Dante to emerge om Mormonism, and this is not erely because Mormonism is false, ut also because it is small. For an-ther thing the demand of the horizon-al has been stronger on us than that of he vertical. Our situation favored the he development of practical men rather han scholarly men. We have been onstantly on the frontier, expanding ather than concentrating. True, we aintained our identity by our isola-ion, but our isolation also impoverished s. It tended to cut us off from re-ources of learning and ability. Some-imes we got so used to talking to each ther that we forgot how to talk to thers. It was so much easier to be ffective among those who agreed with s already.

And it may be that there are other easons for the failure in fruition — f such it was — of the talent and abil-ty and promise of some of our ablest nen. Some of them felt ill-equipped to vork with the primary sources because f their lack of the tongues. That is lways frustrative for basic historical and theological work. Some of them were surprised by the pace of the years, and did not know until it was too late that a man must live a selective and orderly life if he is to discipline himself into solid accomplishment. Some of them — I surmise — felt intellectually compromised by the tardiness sometimes of Christian orthodoxy to confront directly all the challenges put to it by the times. Some lacked the sense of the past. Some lacked the sense of their own age. Some feared lest their inquiries disturb the theological equilibrium of their church. But be the reasons what they may, there was pathos in it. It is a pity that so much of our promise has not been fulfilled.

IF men of talent and ability are born in our medium as in any other, it must be something in the situation that keeps our rightness from becoming ripeness, something that keeps us from a rich and ample productivity. I have hinted at some of the more deeply seated elements in this situation. Let me conclude this time by pointing out one more reason. It is this: our men lack the opportunity. I am thinking especially of our ministers. There is talent and enterprise among them, and also some scholarly aspiration. But we have not devised a way for them to follow up their serious studies. We make work horses out of them. We put them through a weekly round of "parish" duties, and let them come up, breathless and panting, to their sermon making during the week-end. In return we give them a stinted three weeks of vacation. This is all wrong. For the scholarly among them, this should be three months. They should go to Union, to Princeton, to the Free University, to Edinburgh, to Hartford, to Louisville, or back to Calvin, or whereever, if they want to study. They require time and resources to work out their projects.

We are, as I suggested above, developing so fast horizontally that we are likely to neglect the vertical development. Presumably no one would want to impede this horizontal growth. But we must have the concentration also. Always busy taking on new territory in the open universe of the Reformed challenge we must nevertheless also consolidate the occupation of it. This whole matter of scholarly productivity is admittedly something which cannot be forced. It must come naturally or not at all. But it must come. We must begin to write books some time in which our doctrinal identity is unmistakable and of which it can nevertheless be said that they savor not at all of sectarian *dis*ease.

> Do not wonder to see simple people believe without reasoning. God imparts to them love of Him and hatred of self. He inclines their heart to believe. Men will never believe with a saving and real faith, unless God inclines their heart; and they will believe as soon as he inclines it. And this is what David knew well, when he said: *inclina* cor meum, Deus, in . . . .
>
> Pascal, *Pensees*

Jesus and the Old Testament

by HENRY STOB

WHAT was Jesus' view of the Hebrew Scriptures? What did he teach, by word and attitude, respecting the place and authority of the Old Testament writings? Did he regard the Jewish Canon as comprising the inspired Word of God, supernaturally communicated and preserved, and exercising unconditional authority over the lives of men? Or did he perhaps repudiate it — in whole or part? Did he distinguish between the Written Word and the Scribal Tradition? If so, what was his attitude toward each? Did he conform his own life to the precepts of Scripture, recognizing it as binding, or did he on occasion appeal to a higher authority? Did he recognize, besides the Hebrew Bible, an additional source of knowledge of God's will and purpose? How, according to him, was one to understand the Scriptures? Was he conscious of transcending or superceding the Old Testament Revelation?

That these are not idle questions every serious reader of the New Testament will acknowledge. They emerge from the main stream of the Christian records. The synoptists unquestionably accept the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament; they freely quote it, are at considerable pains to vindicate its prophecis respecting the Messiah, and report words of Jesus which imply its unconditional validity. Yet they represent him as in constant conflict with the Pharisees about matters of the Law, and include sayings of his which suggest only a qualified acceptance of the inspired writings. What view of Scripture, we should like to know, could enable the Lord to speak at one time as though the Law and the Prophets had ceased with John, and at another to declare them to be eternal — unchangeable in respect even of one jot or tittle? In terms of what principle are we to reconcile his condemnation of the elders for making the Word of God of none effect, and his words enjoining obedience to those who sit in Moses' seat? The student of Paul confronts the same problem. What enabled that Apostle, who recognized the Law to be holy and "the commandments holy and good," to declare in the name of Christ that we are no longer under the Law, but under Grace? The Christian Church recognizes Jesus as its Lord; in fidelity to what in him did it include the Old Testament in its Canon, while failing to observe its ceremonial injunctions? By what understanding of the mind of their Master did Christ's followers break with Judaism and shortly thereafter repudiate Marcion?

* * * *

JESUS, the Liberals tell us, was a child of his age. There is truth in the statement. If it means, however, that Jesus was merely a product of Judaism, and, in the fulness of his character and work, dependent upon the succession of history in time, it is palpably false. There is, as the church has always confessed, something superhistorical about Christ. Though in history, he is not of history. He is unique, *sui generis*, of the order of Melchisedek. He is the Son of God incarnate. There is an eternal moment in him that refuses to be pressed into temporal categories. In Jesus God's love cuts through all historical and psychological mediacies. This it is necessary to affirm in opposition to the modern historism and psychologism that is offended by the skandalon of an eternal revelation in Christ and by the paradox of a universal man.

Yet Jesus can in a sense be regarded as a child of his times. He was born out of the house of David, into a particular community, at a definite point of history. He was a Hebrew, born under the law, and trained according to its precepts. His language, his conduct, his themes, and his thought forms were in the tradition of his people, and we are learning that his teachings differed but slightly from those of the Judaism of his day. Klausner is even prepared to say that "throughout the gospels there is not one item of ethical teaching which cannot be paralleled either in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, or in the Talmudic and Midrashnic literature of the period near to the time of Jesus," and adds: "Without exception Jesus is wholly explainable by the Scriptural and Pharisaic Judaism of his time" (*Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 384).

With this last a Christian will not agree. Jesus himself was conscious of his own originality, and as Scott says, "there can be no doubt that he came forward as a teacher under an irresistible impulse to proclaim something new" (*The New Testament Idea of Revelation*, p. 85). What he brought could not, he believed, be poured into old skins. Yet Klausner and others have served to remind us that Jesus did not live and preach in a vacuum. He taught in a definite milieu, and his teachings found their roots in the past. Though himself a revelation, he witnessed to a revelation already existent. He came proclaiming the truth of God as set down in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. It was not in opposition to, but in confirmation of the Law that he delivered his message. He came not to destroy, but to fulfill.

* * * *

FIDELITY to Scripture is basic in Jesus. It was this fidelity as much as anything else that involved him in quarrels with the Scribes and Pharisees. It was not because they upheld the Law, but because they perverted it and made it of none effect, that he lashed them (Mk. 7:8; Mt. 15:3). When called upon to defend his teachings it is to Scripture that he appeals (Mk. 2:26; 11:17; 15:34). When a seeker after eternal life asks him the way thither he refers him to the Word of God (Mt. 10:19; Lk. 10:26). When a certain newness in his utterances renders him momentarily suspect, he declares: "Think not that I came to destroy the Law and the Prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfill" (Mt. 5:17).

It was on them that he nurtured his own soul. He was brought up in and breathed the atmosphere of the spiritually minded circle represented by Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon, and Anna and with them he "walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless" (Lk. 1:6). To what extent the Scriptures had become a part of him is evident from his habit of resorting to Scriptural language in the deepest crises of his life. It is by the word of Moses that he repulses Satan in the wilderness, and David furnishes him with speech as he agonizes on Calvary. It cannot be doubted that Jesus' acceptance of the Torah is firm and complete. It is the foundation on which he builds.

It is important to remember this basic loyalty of Jesus to the Scriptures. There are those who presume to find warrant in his life and teaching for the setting up of an authority higher and more vital than any combination of written words. It is not, we are told, by consulting any external oracle, be it Pope or Book, that we know the will of God; it is by attending to the promptings of God's Spirit in our hearts. To the authority of any book or creed we must oppose the authority of our spiritual intuition and religious experience. The highest revelation of God is in the depths of the individual soul sensitive to the universally operating Spirit of God. "The children of the Father, in virtue of their filial relation to Him, know Him directly, and spontaneously maintain communion with him apart from temple and synagogue" (Mackinnon: *The Historic Jesus*, p. 325). This, it is alleged, is what Jesus taught us, and he himself appealed to the inner guide in opposing his "But I say unto you" to the "Ye have heard" of the religious tradition.

In answer it must be said that Jesus' "religious experience" (the phrase is not apt) was throughout conditioned by his study of the Scriptures. He entertained not only a theoretical regard for these; they were woven into the very fibre of his life. Furthermore, the deliverances of his "consciousness" were always in corroboration and establishment of the revelation contained in the Old Testament writings. It was on the basis of and in fidelity to the Scriptures that he proclaimed his message. This fact did not escape his followers. It was not a gratuitous whim that moved the Christian Fathers to combine the Old and New Testaments into one authoritative book to be used by them for the nourishment of their spiritual life. It was loyalty to Christ that impelled them. They, at any rate, never understood him to have supplanted the Scriptures by an inner witness.

This insistence by Jesus on an objective revelation as the seat of authority in a religion does not, of course, involve a rejection of the inner witness; the two are complementary and interactive. It merely makes plain that the inner witness is a *witness*. It does not stand alone; it testifies of something. The inward condition of the heart is always an *attitude;* faith is a *responsive* activity; the spirit is a *testifying* spirit; "experience" is an experience of *something*. And it was always to the objective reference of the spiritual life — to God and His Word — that Jesus recalled his hearers.

* * * *

It is obvious, however, that in some sense Jesus stood above and beyond the written word. However true it may be that he searched the Scriptures and commanded his followers to do likewise, it is equally true that he marks an advance upon the past, bringing a revelation which, if it does not contradict the Old, at least heightens and improves it. The fact is patent enough. How is it to be interpreted?

Some, as was suggested above, would explain it in terms of a "religious experience" not qualitatively different from that of other men. This explanation is unacceptable, however, inasmuch as our "experiences" are not so much critics of as they are criticized by the Revelation of God. Moreover, the Scriptures themselves supply a different interpretation. They affirm that the phenomenon in question is to be looked at from the point of view of the supernatural process of revelation.

Jesus, according to Christianity, is both the revealer and the revealed. As a revealer he stands in the succession of the prophets. Like them he believed himself to be sent from God (Lk. 4:43; Mt. 21:37; Jn. 3:17, 34) and to have a message not his own. "I speak," he says, "not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak; . . . the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak" (Jn. 12:49, 50). It is this special communication from God, the same God who spoke to Moses and the Prophets, that Jesus feels constrained to proclaim. It is as a servant, as a bearer of a message, as under a kind of spiritual duress, that he appears on the scene.

Considered under this aspect, Jesus' authority was not his own; the prophet's authority is never the authority of man. The rights, privileges, and powers of a prophet are never to be regarded as definitive of the rights, privileges, and powers of a man per se. The revelations borne by them may never be psychologized down into deliverances of their own consciousness. It is the possession of something wholly underived from "experience" that is the genius of prophetism. The prophets are characterized not so much by the fact that they spoke, as by the fact that they were spoken to. They did not discover God's will while on a religious quest; they were arrested and conscripted into God's service, frequently against their will. Their authority lay not in their own excellence, piety, or earnestness, but solely in the fact that they were chosen by God, and by a supernatural act made receptive for his word. They knew themselves to be bearers of a revelation, and revelation is more than religious experience. It is the divine criticism and transformation of religious experience.

Two things then emerge from a consideration of Jesus as a prophet. First, his advance upon the Old Testament revelation is not made on the basis of a religious experience of a kind common to the race of men. And second, the advance was not at the expense of the Old Testament, but on the basis of it. It did not supplant; it supplemented. It did not destroy; it fulfilled.

However we view the matter, therefore, we cannot, with appeal to Christ set up our "experience" as a standard in terms of which to criticize the revelation of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. If it be indeed a revelation (and Jesus regarded it so) there is no possibility of standing above it. It stands above us as a judge and we have no alternative but to obey. It was precisely this that Jesus taught us. Not mystic intuition, not this or that experience of an individual or group, but the Law and the Prophets — here one finds the will of God.

In what sense Jesus "went beyond" the Law and the Prophets I hope to discuss in a succeeding article.

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Jacob Noordewier

by J. G. VANDEN BOSCH

When he retired from active service and made his home in Grand Rapids, the Reverend Jacob Noordewier became a familiar figure among us. We saw him, the very old clergyman who had in years gone far beyond the Biblical limit of three score and ten and whose eyesight was failing him, picking his way along Eastern Avenue, with cane in hand. Even when he had already passed the ninety mark, the burdens of a long life had not caused his frame to stoop; his figure was still as erect as ever. Seeing him year after year making his wonted rounds, we, at least some of us, began to think of him in Dr. Holmes's fashion as the "last leaf upon the tree," and were reminded of what the poet wrote,

I saw him once before,
As he passed the door,
And yet again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

Jacob Noordewier was born December 27, 1839, at Niezijl in the province of Groningen, the oldest of a family of four sons and two daughters. The father plied the trade of shoemaking, and being an excellent penman and good in arithmetical computations, he was often employed by the mayor for assistance in clerical work. At the early age of eleven the lad was taken out of school to be an apprentice in his father's trade. Since he had a good mind and ranked highest in his classes, this termination of his formal education at so early an age was most unfortunate. A still more serious misfortune was the untimely death of his father, when he, the oldest, was only twelve years of age. An epidemic of typhoid fever broke out and took the high toll of twenty-six lives in the small village of Niezijl. The father and the mother and four children were smitten with this scourge, but only the father fatally. Bravely continuing the business of her husband, the mother sorely needed the support of her sons, which they gladly gave. Being the oldest, Jacob became his mother's right hand and gradually assumed a goodly share of a father's responsibilities. He remained at home, unmarried, until he was twenty-six years old. There was no talk of working for wages; all the earnings went into the common fund. This arrangement in the Noordewier family sheds an interesting side light on the economic life of the time, so entirely different from what prevails today.

The parents were members of the state church but became increasingly suspicious that things were not what they should be. The baptism of one of the younger children served as a rude awakening. The father informed the pastor that he would not respond affirmatively to the questions usually asked because what was proclaimed from the pulpit was not the "true and complete doctrine of salvation." Upon advice of the pastor the father withheld the usual response, but had no peace. His conscience troubling him, he began to attend services in neighboring churches and soon was instrumental in organizing a Seceder church in Niezijl. The loss of some trade did not daunt the father. It was in a home where a wholesome religious atmosphere prevailed that the Noordewier children were reared.

The one minister who exerted a strong formative influence on young Noordewier from his seventeenth to his twenty-seventh year was the Reverend Roelof Duiker, his pastor. It was under the ministrations of this clergyman that he grew to spiritual maturity and made profession of his faith. However, let no one think that it was easy for the young man to take the final step that united him with the church. As did many Christians of those days, he lived through a period of spiritual struggle. Sin was to him a grim reality, and the sinfulness of the human heart not less so. There were days when he surrendered and lived seriously, delighting in the study of Scripture, the reading of sermons, and the company of the saints. But there also were less refreshing days when he yielded to the lure of sinful practices. He was, for example, fond of skating, a sport in which he could not indulge because of the nature of his work except on Sunday. And so he skated on Sunday, only to be plagued with remorse afterwards. We are reminded of the experiences of John Bunyan as recorded in his *Grace Abounding*. Complete surrender t Christ meant struggle, often seriou agonizing. How Bunyan bewailed th prank of ringing the church bell a the wrong time and how slowly he cam to the light. It is to be feared tha today the consciousness of sin is not very disturbing factor in the lives o many saints and that the decision t confess faith in Christ is easily made Such experiences as Bunyan had, an Noordewier, too, fostered a virile faitl and made their Christianity somethin very real and precious.

The reading of literature on the sub ject of missions kindled in young Noor dewier the desire to bring the gospel t foreign lands. There being an appea for missionaries in the foreign field he was urged by his friends to offe himself. Together with others he re paired to Kampen to be examined, bu owing to unexpected developments in th field no one was accepted. Evidentl this desire in him was not very strong for his disappointment was not grea and on his way home the feeling cam to him that he would some day be preacher of good tidings in Americ He, too, thought of America as tha marvelous land where the poor an frustrated of Europe found refuge an where unfulfilled wishes came tru Across the ocean, therefore, in Americ land of opportunity, called by Mar Antin in one of her books *The Prom ised Land*, he felt that his desire mig be realized. But for the present th way was blocked. Mother's busine needed him; brother Tonnis, four yea younger, also cherished ministeri aspirations; and the possibility of m grating did not present itself.

* * * *

The unexpected happened. Re Duiker received a call from the Spri Street church of Grand Rapids a felt constrained to accept. Invited h his pastor to accompany him a granted permission by his moth Noordewier decided to migrate and a rived in the new world in the mon of June, 1867. At once he began t study of theology, not with Rev. Vand Werp, but by special arrangement wi Rev. Duiker. Because there was a cr ing need of ministers the time for pre aration was cut short. Having studi

only eighteen months, he was urged to submit to his final examination, and in February, 1869, together with J. Stad and W. Greve, he was officially declared eligible to a call. Barely two years had passed and his ambition was realized. America was indeed a sort of Eldorado which justified the most sanguine dreams for the achievement of fabulous riches. Only Noordewier's Eldorado was of a special kind and in the providence of God brought him spiritual riches.

As a matter of fact, Noordewier's training for the ministry began when he was still in the homeland. Pastor Duiker, discerning in his young member so deeply interested in Kingdom work a man of parts, had the good sense of stirring up the gifts that were in him, and made use of him in various church activities, such as conducting catechetical classes, teaching Sunday School, and being leader in a missionary society. Groups interested in Bible study sought his leadership. The consistory asked him to function as reader and precentor in the worship services of the church. To qualify himself the better he began to take private lessons from his pastor. In this way did providence watch over the training of Noordewier for the sacred ministry.

The denomination which the new candidate was now ready to serve was still small, though its growth was encouraging. In the twelve years of its history it had grown from four to eighteen congregations, and the number of ministers had increased from one to ten, their names being K. Vanden Bosch, W. H. Van Leeuwen, D. J. Vander Werp, J. R. Schepers, W. H. Frieling, F. Hulst, E. L. Meinders, R. Duiker, J. Schepers, and K. Weiland. The year 1869 saw two new congregations organized and three men trained in this country added to the ministry; so that the future looked bright. Not one candidate needed to despair of getting a call. Six weeks of preaching in Pella led to Noordewier's being called there. He accepted the call, but before ordination he married Johanna Hillegonda Gezon, whose father served the Spring Street church as elder and was a teacher in the Williams Street school.

Before he was ordained candidate Noordewier had an interesting experience which he recorded in his autobiography (published by Eerdmans-Sevensma Company, 1920) with keen appreciation both of its humor and its seriousness. I quote and translate freely:

A certain Mr. Brouwer, who preached for a group of people at Franklin, Illinois, appeared at the meeting of classis and expressed the desire of himself and group to unite with our church. I was delegated by classis to investigate and report. I was met by Mr. Brouwer at the station, and together we had to travel ten miles farther before we reached our destination. It was agreed that I should visit as many families as I could and that each should preach once the following Sunday.

Going from home to home I could not find any one who knew anything about Brouwer's trip and its purpose. Nobody seemed to know anything about religion or to take it seriously, so that I could accomplish but little. Yet Brouwer claimed to speak every Sunday under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church, which he did gratis. Collections were taken only when the expenses for a guest preacher had to be met.

On Saturday, young and inexperienced as I was, I had a strange encounter. As I was conversing in a certain home with three women, an uncouth person entered. He looked at me and asked, "Who are you?"

"My name is Noordewier, and people like me are sometimes called dominie," I answered.

"Did you come here to preach? We can do this ourselves."

"Well, that's not so bad. But, though we can sing together, we cannot preach together. Now that I am here, you must give me some room and allow me to preach for you."

"About what? That man has a soul?"

"Must I infer that you folk have no soul?"

"Yes, the blood is the soul."

"Well, I am still young and was ignorant of this, but now I have learned something. But who have built these houses and barns that I see?"

"People," said he.

"That teaches me," said I, "that there is much practical sense in blood."

"Yes, and you intend to spiritualize the Bible?"

"Isn't that permissible?"

"Can you give me an explanation of the books of Daniel and the Revelations?" he asked.

"Certainly," said I, "for this reason I am classed among the learned but I was born in a land where one person does not do everything. If you interpret for me one certain text, I hope to give you an interpretation of the two books. Explain Colossians 3:3."

Now it was his task to explain how it was possible that the believers at Colosse who had died still lived. Unable to do this, he would no longer speak with me, saying that in an argument with blackcoats one always lost. He left, and I was rid of my impossible task.

On Sunday, matters were not any better. As we gathered in the schoolhouse to hear Brouwer preach, those present talked about soil and crops, and occasionally I heard profanity, but Brouwer, being deaf, could not hear this. His preaching was poor. He had a text but did not touch it and merely talked at random. The collection to pay for the expenses of the visiting preacher amounted to $1.80, and I was to pay my railroad fare with this. All this for walking ten miles and preaching once. The following night I slept at Franklin and was sick with a high fever. In the morning Brouwer came to see me, and, kneeling at my bedside — not to pray — he asked me how I was faring. I answered that I was a little better.

"I thought so," he said, "my intentions with you were so good."

I almost laughed, and thought, This is encouraging.

So far the quotation which is inserted here because it reveals much not only of the man Noordewier, but also of religious conditions in some settlements at that time.

* * * *

NOORDEWIER was ordained, October 10, 1869, and served successively Pella, Kalamazoo, Holland, Lafayette, again Kalamazoo, Fremont, Kellogsville, Jenison, and Firth, Nebraska. From 1891 to 1893 he was in the employ of the Board of Home Missions for the purpose of collecting funds for the erection of a building for the Theological School. Hithertoo the church had rented the second story of the school on Williams Street, but better quarters were sorely needed. It was proposed that the denomination erect a building of its own, but where were the funds to come from? Not until Rev. Noordewier consented to act as collector and thus be the executor of his own plan was this problem solved. The money came and the noble structure on the corner of Madison and Fifth was erected. In undertaking what seemed

Jacob Noordewier —Cont.

a colossal project he had to sacrifice much. He left an attractive congregation at Fremont to attempt an uncertain task which exposed him at times to all manner of indignity. Only his love of the school and the denomination could induce him to do the work and to persevere till the goal had been reached.

The living who today review the ministry of Rev. Noordewier cannot help admiring his accomplishments, for he indeed labored abundantly and wisely. Some of the congregations whose call he heeded were in a bad state, either torn with bickerings and dissension or suffering from serious defection, so that several of them were very much in need of his sage counsel and firm guidance. In his first charge many families had left owing to a grave indiscretion of his predecessor, but under Rev. Noordewier, young and inexperienced though he was, congregational life returned to normal and members were added. It is no wonder that, when he bade farewell at the end of a pastorate of two years, there were many who wept. In another charge he found a similar situation. The membership had been greatly depleted because many had been lured by the preaching of one who was not an authorized minister, but here too he succeeded in restoring tranquility and growth. In still another, bickerings were so common as to necessitate weekly consistory meetings, but by insisting on observing the rule found in Matthew 18:15 he soon reduced the meetings to once a month. And in his last charge Rev. Noordewier found so much moral obtuseness that he almost despaired. For example. one of the elders owned a meat market which he allowed his son to keep open for business on Sunday. But the church listened to the admonitions of their worthy pastor and saw to it that existing evils were either removed or corrected. Indeed, Rev. Noordewier was a peace maker and spiritually a wise builder.

Rev. Noordewier never was satisfied with being merely pastor of a local church. He so loved his denomination that he actively promoted all its interests and gloried in its progress. He lived not only in it, but also for it. When the church purchased *De Wachter* from his elder, C. Vorst, of Holland, he became associate editor and administrator; in fact, he contributed off and on throughout his entire career. He served as curator of the Theological School, and together with Professor Hemkes and others published the church yearbook. He was synodical treasurer till long after his emeritation. That his abilities were appreciated by his peers is also shown by the fact that he was frequently selected to be an officer of the meetings of synod, assistant secretary, secretary, or vice-president. He gave generously of his time and talent to the church.

This biographical sketch may strike some readers as a success story and nothing more. It is indeed a far cry from being a maker and mender of shoes in a small village to being an honored minister of the Divine Word in the church of Jesus Christ. To have made this ascent with scarcely any formal education is remarkable, even astonishing. But let no one think that the ascent was easy; it was beset with many hardships and meant toil and struggle. Consider his extremely limited education. In the eighteen months of his formal training he studied dogmatics, church history, Bible history, exegesis, geography, arithmetic, general history, and the Holland language. So his diploma tells us. He also studied English. The curriculum was narrow indeed; it did not even include church government which he needed very much nor had he had any instruction in the art of sermonizing. To be able to do what he did he must have read much and studied hard.

Sometimes the young student became despondent. There were times when he sat down to ponder the seriousness of his situation. Parting with his mother and brothers and sisters, abandoning a trade that brought a fair livelihood, crossing the ocean to a strange land, preparing himself for the ministry in a strange way — all this seemed foolhardy to him. No wonder that one could at such moments find him behind Rev. Duiker's church, weeping. After ordination the real test would come. The making of two fresh sermons every week, the worry occasioned by encountering difficulties in the congregation, the criticism of contentious members — these were far from alluring prospects. But believing to be in God's way, he trusted, persevered, and overcame.

What was the secret of Rev. Noordewier's success? A partial answer must be that God had richly endowed him with many excellent qualifications. His intellectual ability, to begin with, was a most desirable endowment and stood him in good stead. Next, generously supplied with good sense, he understood human nature and knew how to deal with its vagaries and irregularities. Closely related to this good sense was a fine sense of humor that enabled him to smile at the incongruities of an act or a situation and kept him from making foolish decisions. Again, if one conversed with him, one could not fail to notice with what moderation he spoke and how seldom he used superlatives, which habit was but a manifestation of the even temper of the man. No provocation of any kind could ruffle that even temper and make him lose self-control. Furthermore, his self-control was an aid to his wonted caution. It seems that in these early days there often were church members who delighted in testing a minister's knowledge of Scripture or Reformed truth by confronting him with tricky questions.

Rev. Noordewier's life was not devoid of sorrow. In 1901 death removed from his side his beloved wife. To their happy union six children were born: Albert, a physician; John, a minister of the gospel; Tony, often an elder in the Neland Avenue church, also treasurer of college and seminary and of synod; Jacob, frequently a deacon in the La Grave Avenue church; Mrs. Tina Mastenbroek, member of Kellogsville church; and Helen, who in 1902 married Rev. John R. Brink. In 1905 Rev. Noordewier married the widow of Rev. P. Bakker whose companionship he enjoyed for several years. The last year of his life his vitality gradually ebbed away and in the month of February, 1938, when he was almost a hundred years old, he was called to the land of eternal rest.

The active career of Rev. Noordewier came to an end in 1912 when he asked for his emeritation. To the forty-three years of active service, God added twenty-five of rest interrupted only by two terms as an elder in the first Church a generous length of time for reminiscense and for enjoyment. The wonder is that so much was accomplished with so little to begin with. The church owes much to the humble Rev. Noordewier who was keenly aware of his limitations. The God of grace has honored him with the rich reward which the prophet Daniel beautifully describes: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

Brillenburg Wurth on Bavinck

by LEWIS B. SMEDES*

On the 13th of December last, the anniversary of the birth of Herman Bavinck was celebrated. The Reformed press of the Netherlands took due and appreciative note of this date. Several articles have appeared recalling various facets of Bavinck's life and work. Neither should this event pass us by unnoted. For Bavinck is held in noble memory and high esteem amongst us. Sad to say, his work today is comparatively unknown. His books are little read. Nevertheless, indirectly at least, they have put their stamp upon us. Our systematic theology, as studied by our theological students, is by and large a facsimile of Bavinck's theology. Those who have read Bavinck's own dogmatics through are relatively few. Even fewer are those who have read the other, smaller, but still relevant works. Yet, what theology we have is to a large extent, perhaps larger than we realize, owed to the gigantic and catholic labors of Herman Bavinck.

Other aspects of Bavinck's life are revealing and instructive too. One of these is the cross of mistrust that he had to bear in the midst of his fruitful labors. It was not all roses that he received in his life-time. There were suspicions and innuendoes in the air even while he labored like a trojan of faith for the Reformed cause. Dr. G. Brillenburg Wurth, in the December 17 issue of the *Gerformeerde Weekblad* provides us with an interesting study of Bavinck's life struggle. We present it here in translation, with the conviction that it bears much instruction and inspiration for us Reformed Christians one hundred years after Bavinck's birth. Herewith, then, the article of Dr. Wurth.

* * *

The development of Bavinck's life bears in many ways the character of a beam of light that increases in intensity as it grows. He was always growing spiritually, unfolding ever more richly and fully. He was theologian, from beginning to end, a theologian of such format as few have been. But in the actual life of our community as well as in church dogmatics, he was of high importance and influence. Countless church commissions received his services; many determinative ecclesiastical decisions bear his stamp. Later, he played a leading role in the field of psychology and pedagogy. In educational circles, his word continued to grow in authority. Then came politics; he was a respected member of parliament for a considerable time.

The Reformed folk admired and respected him, of course. Outside our own circles too, his name was honored highly. The Royal Academy of Sciences made room for him in its ranks. In his time, considering his clear Christian convictions, this was an event of great exception.

Yet, in the face of these facts, it must be said that Bavinck's career was not without difficulty and troubles. Many, very many, in our community, besides honoring him for his great work, held him in dear affection. But there were also those who were reserved in respect to him. They did not publicly air their mistrust, yet gave it to be known that he was not fully to be trusted. What was behind this suspicion? I would put it this way. In the character and life of Bavinck was concentrated the real crisis which has been present in our Reformed churches for a long time. Indeed, it is a crisis which still faces us.

Bavinck was a child of the Secession . . . and to the end he remained a spiritual son of that movement. He was never ashamed of his spiritual parentage, his close affinity to the simple, pious folk who broke away from the Synodical organization in 1834. The spiritual character of the Secession was manifest in him throughout; his was a marked, deeply rooted piety. But he gradually grew out of the external isolation characteristic of the Secessionists at first. It was not surprising that he chose as the subject for his rectoral oration in 1884; *The Catholicity of the Church and Christendom.* For Bavinck came to be a "catholic" Christian in the deepest and best sense of the word.

In our student days, we heard him speak of *The Cosmic Significance of Christ.* Again, a fitting theme for Bavinck! The theme was struck again in his magnificent chapter on *The Power of the Church* in his dogmatics. For Bavinck, Christ had significance in the widest sense for the whole world. God's intent was to re-establish the whole of His creation in Christ, thus to lead it to its consummation. Ephesians 1:10 was one of his favorite passages. It is no wonder, for here Paul speaks of God gathering together in one all things in Christ, "both which are in heaven, and which are on earth."

This text typifies the profound background to all of Bavinck's life and work. Its vision inspired him all his life. It led him to an almost unlimited sphere of interest and therewith a like unlimited sphere of activity. But this was not always understood by those around him. His mind was open to everything that was fermenting in the modern world. He did not close his eyes to the problems besetting modern man. He could not pass them by. He was and remained a real Secessionist. But he was also genuinely a modern man. He did not learn from a distance what modern man was thinking and where his aspirations were directed. He did not learn modern man from books. The feeling for and sense of life typical of modern man were known to his own inmost soul.

This is what gave such great value to everything he wrote. A book like *Philosophy of Revelation* is an eloquent example. Here we witness a biblical-Reformed Christian wrestling with the questions of modernity with an honesty and an earnestness that cannot but stir the reader's emotions. Among his own, however, were those who were not able to experience this with him. Out of their inability arose a suspicion that he was false to principle.

That our churches did not sink into a spiritual lethargy after the Secession, but went on to play a role of significance in the spiritual development of our nation, is to be traced to the work of Bavinck — along with that of Kuyper. But it did not go easy for Bavinck. He was not made of exactly the same spiritual stuff as was Kuyper. No less than Kuyper, Bavinck was aware of the spiritual antithesis. But

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Brillenburg Wurth on Bavinck — Continued

though he recognized the antithesis well, he never let it become an easily swung gavel, a simple solution that settled all. He did not, though others of later days did. This did not make it easy for him inside; he suffered much because of it. For though he knew he stood antithetically to the world, he knew also that he was at the same time spiritually one with it. There were those who for such things refused to admit that Bavinck was fully Reformed. This, happily, did not make him bitter. But it often brought him grief.

But this was not his only hardship. Bavinck knew for himself too well that he was not a finished product. To the end, he wrestled with all the problems with which we today still wrestle. He wrestled with the kind of great and profound open-mindedness and sincerity that can be expected only from a genuine Christian scholar. Must we view this incompleteness, this feeling that all answers have not been given, as a shadow falling over his greatness? We do not believe so. Indeed, we are convinced that this is the key to Bavinck's greatness. Many people are ripe so fast, have the answers so handy, because they have never come face to face with the real problems. That was not Bavinck. And we must be all the more thankful to him for it. The more, since his struggles with the problems of modernity never broke the deep certainty of his faith or the convictions of his faith. On the contrary, it was because he knew in his heart that fundamental certainty that he dared honestly to recognize that there was very much concerning which he had not yet found final certainty.

This is the question that arises from the figure of Bavinck for the Reformed churches of our day. Bavinck's crisis is the crisis of our Reformed churches. He did not have an easy time. But how is it possible for a genuinely Reformed Christian to take it easy? He has a foundation that stands unmoved: God's eternally abiding Word, His revelation of truth in Jesus Christ. But with this, the Reformed Christian stands *in* the world, in a world where problems of enormous scope arise anew every day, problems that strike like hurricanes.

How can we as Reformed churches look forward to the future? Only as we are prepared, with and in spiritual discipleship of Bavinck, to confront the questions that force themselves upon us. Only as we, with the deep conviction of faith and in the open mindedness and earnestness that typified Bavinck, occupy ourselves restlessly with the real problems of the day. Only as we are willing to take on ourselves the bitter cross which such wrestling makes inevitable.

The Sudan United Mission

by LILLIAN V. GRISSEN

III — "One Plus One"

"One Plus One," the slogan of the golden Jubilee of the SUM was also its plan for 1954. Always the soul-stirring sober thought is with us that we know not how long our Lord will tarry. Therefore "one plus one" is imperative. Rev. E. H. Smith, Field Secretary of the SUM, stated at the time, "This plan which is attracting much attention, is that each believer seek through prayer and witness to lead others to the Saviour. To encourage this and to demonstrate our faith we have set apart the first full week of 1954. It is to be dedicated to God's service in seeking the lost in town and village, hamlet and farm home. Personally I hope that much attention will be given to the larger towns in our area and that there will be concentrated endeavor by missionaries and local Christians to bring the word to every quarter of these congested parts of our territory."

Extensive plans were laid for the Jubilee, not for noisy celebration, but for thoughtful thanksgiving, gracious gratitude for the work which God has wrought in the Sudan, and sober analysis of the task which lies ahead. According to the Field Secretary, the "very *immediate objective* of the Mission as a whole is to honor God in suitable ways for granting us fifty years in which to serve Him, and it is most gratifying (we trust that God will grant him length of days) that one of the original trio* will be back in Nigeria to celebrate the occasion with us all. A unique feature will be the gathering together of missionaries from all parts including those farthest afield. There has been great blessing in earlier years attendant upon these triennial fellowships, and we expect even greater blessing in January as it will also include visits from many different home boards. Our expectation of blessing is at a high pitch." (Your staff of missionaries in Nigeria is grateful that the Synod of 1953 accepted the invitation of the Nigerian General Conference that a delegation from our Home Board might also attend this SUM Jubilee, as well as visit our own field of activities.)

"Our *further objective,*" Mr. Smith stated, "though not changed from those which originally actuated the churches at home to send to this land, is none the less fresh and real. Political pressure in certain sections, and lack of personnel have so far made the chain of missions from the Niger to the Nile incomplete. It must not be forgotten in this respect that it may soon be no so much a question of foreign mission stations but of Christian witnesses and the occupying of these untouched areas by the Africans themselves. At the time of the Jubilee there are several thousand Christians, i.e., Church members in full communion, in the Nigerian churches of the SUM. That number can be greatly augmented from French Equatorial Africa and Anglo Egyptian Sudan churches of the SUM. Although in so vast a population this number may seem a meager one, we must remember that they are the salt of the earth."

As the SUM looks back over the long road traveled — in evangelization, medical ministry, and educational endeavor — it looks ahead along each of these roads also. Opposition is multiplying — the tempo of the onrush of Islam is increasing, the rise of nationalism and the clamoring for complete independence among elements of the Nigerian people, and through it all the blessing which too often reverts to detriment — material prosperity — combine to present the SUM with a continuing challenge.

"Thus," concluded Mr. Smith, "the *lasting objective* of the Mission, so wise and so good, is the formation of a

* Rev. Maxwell

African Church. This is a Scriptural purpose, not only the conversion of sinners but evidence on earth of their fellowship together as the body of Christ. In such a scene as the present Africa, it is encouraging to note the Nigerian churches of the SUM are quickly becoming adult and are sufficiently advanced to be recognized politically and legally as a native body with a rightful place in the community. To this end plans are well ahead for the formation and incorporation of the Ekklesiyar Kristi A Sudan."

Missions are still an accepted element by the Nigerian Government, and are frequently looked upon as a convenient method of social development in the land. The danger of government benevolence submerging missionary identity into a social program is not unforgotten, and the struggle to prevent the Gospel becoming second because of tremendous other work requires constant vigilance and the reevaluation of aims and plans. Governmental restrictions are, however, increasing, and these difficulties must be faced. Schools and hospitals must meet stated stipulations and regulations as to size, location, construction, etc. Workers, in order to be government recognized, must meet government qualification.

Demands for education, and the necessity for it, abound and increase annually. There must be an increasing upgrade in the quality and learning of the pastors, elders, deacons and evangelists for the sake of the Church's well-being. A review of educational policies and sober scrutiny of the educational future are necessities which confront the Mission anew each year.

* * *

Your "Sudan Mission of the Christian Reformed Church" has been, since the field was taken over in 1940, a Branch of this Sudan United Mission. Its identity is not lost in one immense organization, but rather, each Branch is an autonomous entity. Each branch is responsible to its own Home Board, has its own financial set up, but is "united" with the SUM in an effort to witness the true Gospel, evangelical and orthodox, and to establish an indigenous, true church in the heart of the Sudan.

I remember once when I saw the "SUM" through the eyes of the African. It happened in Makurdi as I sat on an old nail keg in a warehouse while waiting for the never-hurrying Africans to finish loading supplies on the Mission truck and for my husband to finish his business in the office there. I noticed the African clerk write "SIM" on the invoice, so I explained, "We're SUM, not SIM."

He shook his head perplexedly, and said, "I can't understand it, there are so many mission groups here — SIM, DRCM, SUM, UMS, CBM — now, just what is the difference between SIM and SUM?"

I explained that we were people from many lands, England, America, Canada, Switzerland, Scotland, Denmark, New Zealand, and Australia, who had all come to Africa for one purpose, namely, to tell the story of Jesus. It was true, I told him, that we could work separately according to nationality, but since our desire to witness for one true God was one, we wished to unite in purpose, prayer and hope, and also work together that some day here in Africa there will also be a united church, comprised of thousands upon thousands of believing African Christians.

"Oh," said his helper, who had slipped in and had overheard the conversation, "you mean just like we black men are of many, many tribes, we are all Nigerians."

I pointedly realized then that while our denomination could stand alone in its efforts, as many missions do, the "united" expressed by the Sudan United Mission creates a deep impression upon the ever-learning, awakened African, and eliminates much of the bewilderment caused by the numerous organizations and groups.

It is this very unity of purpose and goal which also unites "field members" of the SUM to its friends and supporters in the numerous, world-wide homelands. The slogan "one plus one" may not be dismissed as not meant for them by those who are not actual "field members" of the SUM. Herein lies our united task of private prayer, generous giving, intense interest, and compassionate concern. It may be there is not sufficient time to win thousands, or hundreds, or even tens for Christ. But sit silently by — this we may not, and if each individual as member or supporter of the SUM appropriates for himself this slogan "ONE PLUS ONE," simple arithmetic will tell us that the immediate gains for Christ can be astonishing, and future gains gigantic.

"In revival every convert is a worker,
And in Jubilee all should have a share;
To seek is to imitate the Master,
'One plus one' will witness that we care."

As Sons of Olivianus

by LEONARD VERDUIN

LATE in the 16th Century a hearing was held to determine the extent of Anabaptist activity in the vicinity of Heidelberg; and, at this hearing the *Oberrat* of the city testified that he "recalls quite well however that Dr. Olivianus had been minded to have their heads knocked off, but, that at the court of Creuzenach he had swung around to a different and a more lenient view." [1]

I am of the opinion that it is high time that the spiritual sons of Olivianus, one of the men responsible for the Heidelberg Catechism, make the same adjustment in their thinking anent the "Anabaptists," as their enemies called them spitefully. It is to assist in bringing about "a different and a more lenient view" that this is written. We shall resort to the same materials that caused Olivianus to let go of the traditional notions concerning the Anabaptists and to adopt a view more in keeping with the facts as he came to know them. We shall make large use of contemporary and unimpeachable testimony.

Be it known that it is not simply an academic interest that impels us.

First of all, truth is always a Christian man's concern — truth, all truth,

1. "weisz sich sonst wol zu erinnern, das D. Olivianus der meinung gewesen, inen die koepf herunder schlagen zu lassen; ist aber uf dem creuzenachischen hofgericht einer andern und miltern meinung worden."

historic truth not excepted. All truth is God's truth; and all error, error in the realm of history too, is serious. History is, for the Christian scholar, the record of God's dealing with the children of men; and to misrepresent these dealings is bad, especially if deliberately continued. Correcting a misrepresentation in the area of history is a Christian pursuit. This alone is enough to justify our present effort.

But there is more. The Anabaptists have been unfairly dealt with—and the Reformed fathers have been party to this unfairness. Unless one holds to the essentially un-Protestant notion that the Reformed tradition deserves only benediction he will welcome every opportunity to come clear, in so far as that is possible so long after, of injustices done by the camp to which he belongs. We welcome the opportunity to say "If we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood . . ." The words of a certain German historian are sadly true, and no one who has taken the trouble to look at the sources will dismiss them lightly: "seldom has a movement in history been persecuted with such ferocity by its contemporaries, and, thanks to their defamations, also wronged and misjudged so long by later generations, as were the Anabaptists, suppressed with equal hatred by each of the three powerful religious groups." One of the three groups to which this scholar has reference is the Reformed group. This Reformed journal seems to us to be an appropriate place to try to do something to end an ancient wrong.

There is a third reason for writing. If Reformed people wish to be good Americans intelligently it will be useful for them to know "the rock whence they are hewn and the hole of the pit whence they are digged." America owes a sizeable debt to Anabaptism, and, it is always good to acknowledge debts; but in this instance such is quite unlikely unless, with Olivianus, we tailor our legends to fit the facts of history.[2]

An essential piece of our "four freedoms" we owe to a belated victory on these shores for the views and the convictions for which a people dubbed "Anabaptists" pioneered, quite alone, and, in the pioneering died. More than one of the things our children are taking for granted could not well have become our heritage had it not been for these Anabaptists. As D. C. Uhlhorn puts it, in his article on Anabaptism in the *Realencyclopedie*, "the Anabaptist movement finds its continuation in the Independents of England. There and in North America Anabaptism has regained anew a significant place in world history." It is hard to deny the essential truth of Ernst Troeltsch's assertion when he says, referring to America, "Here the step-children of the Reformation have finally lived to see the day of their great movement in world history . . . here the end of medievalism was achieved, when the coercive culture carried by the State-church combine was replaced . . ." If Troeltsch is right (and he who would dispose of his words will be hard pressed if the sources are given the place they deserve) we owe it to ourselves to do as Olivianus did; Trocltsch asserted that "The father of the doctrine of human rights is not Protestantism as such, but is the movement hated and driven from the face of the earth by it — Anabaptism." A bit too sweeping you say, and we agree; but containing enough of truth to give us pause.

* * *

WHERE then shall we begin with this confessedly large order? It serves our purpose best to consider first an aspect of Anabaptism that may turn out to be its distinguishing concept. I refer to Anabaptism's *Freiwilligkeitsprinzip*. This German jaw-breaker might be translated, somewhat lamely, by the word Voluntarism. It stands for the view that whatever is done in the proper idiom of the New Testament toward the coming of the Kingdom must be done willingly, voluntarily, and as the result of a genuine exercise of option. This voluntarism is an integral part of the Anabaptist vision. And, conversely, so is a reasoned aversion to coercion in the things of the spirit. Wherever coercion is employed, so the Anabaptist contended, strange fire has been laid on God's altar. And, he who resorts to the technique of physical coercion is not building the Lord's house at all but rather the synagog of Satan. In a day when in the interest of social tranquility unanimity-in-matters-religious was enforced by the secular sword the Anabaptists stood for religion-by-the-free-choice-of-the-devotee. And in this they stood quite alone.

We have an agreement to let the sources do most of the talking. Very well.

Martin Bucer, the Strassburg Reformer, tells us that a certain Anabaptist preacher (probably it was Anton Engelbrecht) who for some years had been preaching the unsullied Gospel "was deposed from this office by the civil magistrate because he refused to sustain the sound doctrine of Infant Baptism and . . . over against this put forth a new Anabaptist error, namely, that the magistrate must leave men undisturbed in matters of religion, whatever he believes or teaches, just so he does not disturb external, political tranquility." It should not escape the reader that according to Bucer's testimony one of the intolerable things in the Anabaptist system was the idea that the civil power must leave a man free to believe and to teach as he likes, just so he does not disturb public quiet. That, as any grade school pupil knows, is good American doctrine — but the Reformed city of Strassburg laid its hand on this Anabaptist for saying it.[3]

Felix Manz was executed, by drowning, for Anabaptist "heresy"; for was it not true, "that he sought to gather together those who were willing to accept Christ and obey the Word, follow Christ moreover, and unite himself to them through baptism, and, leave the rest in their present faith."[4] These attitudes are part and parcel of the American way of life, as any child will

2. The reader is perhaps already asking, "But what about Muenster?" The question is in order and we shall have something to say about that episode in the course of our studies. For the present the words of an eminent Catholic scholar must suffice. Dr. A. Knoepfler, speaking of the Anabaptists and Muenster, says: "Research has shown that this bizarre excess was not the cause but the result of the irresponsible violence practiced upon them for many years."

3. The reader will note that the repudiation of Infant Baptism and the espousal of Voluntarism are by Bucer considered complimentary aspects of one and the same thing. This insight casts a useful light upon the reason for the Annabaptists' repudiation of Infant Baptism. It was too useful an institution for the monolithicism against which they rebelled. We shall enlarge upon this in a later article.

4. "dass er die, die sich Christi welltin annemen und dem wort gehorsam sin, ouch nach Christo wandeln, zwosammen wellt suochen und zich mit denselfben durch Tou vereinbaren, und die andern irs glouben lassen pliben?"

know; it is startling to learn that four hundred years ago they put men in sacks and drowned them for contending for such views. It is humbling to recall that the city that drowned Felix Manz was a Protestant city, a non-Lutheran one moreover!

Clement Ziegler, an Anabaptist, was required, in 1533, to state before the court just what it was that he had against the articles of the Strassburg Synod, held under Reformed auspices. He called attention to the article that laid upon the secular power the duty of enforcing orthodoxy in religious matters; and he countered with, "No one is to be apprehended for doctrine or for faith — that is for hoodlums and criminals only."[5] Clement Ziegler was condemned for these views, views that we in America do not question. One likes to think of this Ziegler as one who "being dead yet speaketh."

Another Anabaptist, Valentin Goldschmidt (also referred to as Veltin Duft), testified similarly and likewise to his hurt, "the secular ruler has no jurisdiction over men's faith; the spiritual sword does not belong to him."[6] These sentiments do not sound strange to us; what does sound strange is that men, Reformed men, considered them strange and worthy of death.

One of the main counts against a group of 150 Anabaptist prisoners, of whom 90 because of unusual physical fitness had been marked to be sold as galley slaves, was that they distinguished sharply between expulsion from the church by excommunication and expulsion from human society by death, urging, "However, if an offensive member is attached to the body, one that refuses to be bettered by any other means, then he is to be excluded from the church and be made to pass for a heathen man. Punishment of any other kind is not employed in the Christian Church."[7] Once heretical (!) views. I feel as though I would like to give them a hand as they resist the conversion-bent preacher with more, these words do not sound strange at all to our ears, so accustomed have we become to them. What does sound strange is that clergymen, Reformed clergymen, should make it their business to try to convert these men from these these words: "Where has God commanded his Son saying 'Go, my Son, into the world . . . teach all nations; but him who refuses to believe your doctrine and preachment, you are to arrest and torture, yes, you must choke him until he does believe?"[8] I could have wished that the spokesman for accepted Protestant orthodoxy in those days had had something better to reply to this, something better than the trite old medieval cliche, an abused text from the Holy Word, one which because of its abuse, has occasioned large pools of human blood upon the earth, namely, the outlandish come-back: "Does not Christ say in the parable, go out in the highways and byways and constrain them to come in in order that my house may be full?"[9] And I am heartened to hear these brave men replying simply, but O so pertinently, thereby coming clear from medieval monolithicism and its inevitable techniques of coercion: "By his Word and by His judgment has Christ constrained men."[10] I am glad and grateful that in my times they don't send men to the galleys for thinking and talking as did these Anabaptists. Under God I am grateful to them for talking thus when it was highly unpopular to do so.

Pilgram Marpeck, one of the cleverest engineers of his day, served the city of Strassburg most acceptably in one of its engineering problems. But Marpeck was an Anabaptist. He too had to go, go on that long, long pilgrimage that was the lot in those days of any man banished. What awful thing had this fine fellow done? He had averred that "All they have eternal punishment awaiting them who seek to sustain the Kingdom of God with the civil magistrate."[11] I am grateful that I can confess to this without becoming a man without a country for saying it, grateful for Pilgram's pilgrimage; for it cannot be that my freedom is unrelated to his martyrdom. But, it makes me sad to know that it was Strassburg, stronghold of Reformed orthodoxy, that thrust him out.

Then there was Hans Denck who taught, and was harmed for teaching it: "Let every one know that in matters of faith everything must take place freely, voluntarily, and without coercion."[12]

The full effect of the Anabaptist travail for one of the basic rights of man will never be measured. It is with this *Freiwilligkeitsprinzip* as it is with spores of yeast; they work largely in the dark. But I am unable to believe that such pioneering for the right of self-determination disappears without a trace.[13]

* * *

RATHER than recite more evidence that the Anabaptists did indeed travail for the *Freiwilligkeitsprinzip* we shall use the rest of the space so kindly allowed us, to recite, and repudiate, the position chosen in this matter by spokesmen for the Reformed tradition, framers of that tradition.

We are embarrassed at what the record reveals.

We are embarrassed by that classical manifestation of lingering monolithicism and its inevitable corallary, the use of physical force in the interest of orthodoxy — we refer to the Servetus slaying. We are even more embarrassed by the nervous defense thereof in the face of telling criticism of the deed and the philosophy leading up to it. My only solace is the thought that probably the very nervousness of the de-

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5. "Es soll Niemand um Lehr oder Glauben verfolgt werden, nur Lecker und Buben."

6. "die weltliche Obrigkeit hab nit ueber den Glauben zu richten; das geistliche Schwerdt gehore der weltlichen Obrigkeit nit zu.

7. "Wo sich aber ein ergerlich glid erfunde am leib, das durch kein ander mittel kann gebessert werden, dann man scheuzst es aus der kurchen und helt es fur ein haiden. Alle andre straaf wirt in der christelichen kirchen nit gebraucht."

8. "Wo hat gott seinem son bevolhen und zu im gesagt, gee hin, mein son Christe, in alle welt . . . ler alle volker, wer aber deiner ler un predig nit glauben will oder sie nit annemen, den solt du fahen, peinigen, ja so lang solt du in wurgen bis sie glauben?"

9. "Sagt Christus nit in der gleichnus . . . gend hinaus auf die landstrassen un an die Zeun und zwingend sie hereinzukomen auf das mein haus voll werde?"

10. "Durch sein wort und urtl hat Christus die menschen zwungen."

11. "Alle die haben ewige Strafe zu erwarten die das Reich Gottes durch die Obrigkeit erhalten wollen."

12. "Jeder sollte wissen dasz es mit den Sache des Glaubens alles frei, willig, und ungezwungen zugehen sollte."

13. It is certainly not a mere coincidence that the first protests against human slavery, that other denial of the *Freiwilligkeitsprinzip*, rose from the hearts and the lips of Anabaptists. Henry Bullinger, Zwingli's successor and one of the chief besmirchers of the Anabaptists, said in his day that it was an old tradition with the Anabaptists that in a genuinely Chrisian society there would be no masters and slaves. (Did he mean to say that this too was bad in the people who were his *bete noire*?). As part of the verifiable record stands the fact that the first voice to ascend in America in condemnaion of slavery here was an Anabaptist voice, back in 1688.

fense is evidence of a conscience awaking to the fact that something that was a part of the ancestral monolithicism was very wrong.

We are embarrassed by the words of Beza, Calvin's successor, as he says, "Christian magistrates, do your duty to God who has put a sword in your hands . . . strike down valiantly these monsters in the guise of men" — persons like this Servetus. We know that he is wrong when he says that they who seek freedom of conscience for men are asking for something "worse than the tyranny of the Pope." There is much good in the words of one of these "monsters in the guise of men" as he says: "Who would not get the impression that Christ is another Moloch or some such deity, if indeed he should ask that living men be burned. Imagine Christ pronouncing the sentence or kindling the fire . . . who would not mistake him for a satanic being? Oh Christ, thou creator and king of all the earth, dost thou not see these things? Art thou indeed so changed as to become thus cruel and contrary to thine own self? Dost thou command . . . that they be smothered in water, struck until their entrails gush out, then to be sprinkled with salt, roasted over a slow fire and tormented with every kind of torture, that kind that brings death slowly given preference? . . . Ah thou Christ, if indeed thou doest these things or orderest them done, then what, pray, hast thou left for the devil to do?" And we feel that there were a lot better things to say to this impassioned plea than that which Beza said in reply: "Oh the blasphemous and impudent gab!"[14] followed by the question-begging refrain that "to punish heretics is the magistrate's first and foremost assignment."[15]

It is embarrassing, the treatment to which Anabaptists in the Frisian city of Sneek were subjected, in the first year of the 17th century. To invade, unbidden, the privacy of a religious gathering held off the street, in the privacy of their own quarters, as was done, was preposterous. And to bring pressures to bear upon the civil rulers "to forbid the practice of their doctrines with specified penalties," as was done, was atrocious. To hurl at the Anabaptist elder, Hoeijte Riencx, the words "afgebrande conscientie," as was done, for quoting Matt. 22:21 and Acts 4:19 in support of his group's policy, was most unkind and un-Christian. We would wish that Johannes Bogerman (for he it was, together with his ministerial colleague at Sneek, that goaded the magistracy to take action against the Anabaptists; Bogerman, the man who two decades later chaired the Great Synod of the Reformed Churches) had not said: "No other matter is as useful unto the welfare and the health of the social order and unto the preclusion of civil commotion as is the practice of a single religion; seeing that no bond of unity or of fidelity exists among men who practice diverse faiths." Ostensibly Bogerman had no quarrel whatsoever with the monolithicism of the Middle Ages; he would be most happy if it would be perpetuated — with this exception, and it only, that not the Catholic Church but his Church was to be the beneficiary! Ostensibly also the basic and principal repudiation of Medieval monolithicism was left to the Anabaptists. And their cause was well worth the martyrdoms which their world required of them in their crusade for the *Freiwilligkeitsprinzip!*

The birth of one of the Four Freedoms had much to do with the Anabaptists' vision. The Anabaptists also have their Theses, as epoch-making as any that went on the door of the Castle Church; but they had no Castle Church on which to post them. They wanted none. They preferred to give expression to their faith in Christ in a different way. In the words of Felix Manz they preferred to give expression to it by singing:

Christ bludgeons none to enter
Into His realm above;
He and he only enters
Who volunteers in love.[16]

14. That is precisely the face of his words as translated by Bogerman: "O des lasteigen ende onbeschaemden becx." I have been unable to locate, either here or abroad, the Latin original.

15. No doubt these men were honest in their convictions that a composite society could not be a happy society. This medieval notion lodging so firmly in their minds goes far to explain the slur that the Anabaptists were seditious folk. We know that this medieval view was a mistaken view. Switzerland, not to mention America again, is a land of widely divergent religious faiths; but few states in all the course of human history have a better record for cooperation and civil quiet. It has, moreover, the problem of widely divergent languages.

16. "Christus thut nieman zwingen; Zu seine Herrlichkeit: Allein wird's dem gelingen Der willig ist bereit."

Thank You

IN OUR *"Fourth Annual Report"* last month we repeated the invitation, which we had extended also the year before, that some of you sponsor the subscriptions of foreign subscribers. The fine response to this invitation last year encouraged us to renew it now. The fact is that of our nearly one hundred foreign readers, well over half are professors, ministers, missionaries, or persons otherwise engaged in direct kingdom work. They are persons of responsibility and influence.

Again this year your responses began to come in at once. First came an encouraging letter from Ireton, Iowa, together with a check for the donor's personal renewal and two foreign subscriptions. Further, an appreciative subscriber from Cleveland wrote concerning some of the articles in our last issue that "they are worth the price of a year's subscription. I read them with absorbing interest, and desire for this year at least to heed your suggestion that some of your readers might pay for someone selected from a list of foreign readers. Accordingly I enclose check for $6.00, which, I believe, will take care of two such cases."

That is a heartening letter to receive and the check incidentally takes care not merely of two but of three such cases. A similar letter reached us from Grand Rapids. This friend of the *Journal* writes: "Enclosed $9.00. Please renew my subscription. Also send the *Journal* to . . . . . You select any others you may wish to receive a subscription." Needless to say, this kind of thing is good for our morale, and we trust, for the morale also of our foreign readers.

To our friends in Cleveland, Ireton and Grand Rapids, we say thank you and we tell you all of it so that some of you, if the impulse and the occasion serve, may follow their example.

Incidentally, this is our last nudging for a year. You did pretty well in December, but there are a lot of you who neglected to return your subscriptions. Do send them in now. Then we can all get back to our proper work.

Sincerely yours, THE STAFF.